



The Battle of Hanoot

Author: (Mufti) Muhammad Huzaifah ibn Adam aal-Ebrahim

A Nidaa-ul-Haqq Publication

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Preface

There is a very well-known Hadeeth:

عن عمران بن حصين قال قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لا تزال
طائفة من أمتي يقاتلون على الحق ظاهرين على من ناوهم حتى يقاتل
آخرهم المسيح الدجال

Hadhrat `Imraan ibn Husayn رضى الله عنه narrates that Rasoolullaah صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "There shall never cease to be a group from my Ummah fighting upon the Haqq, victorious over those who oppose them, until the last of them fight al-Maseeh ad-Dajjaal." [Narrated in *Sunan Abi Daawud*.]

There are numerous other wordings of this Hadeeth narrated in other Kutub of Hadeeth, but what the reader will immediately glean from the words of this Hadeeth is that in every era, right until the emergence of Dajjaal, Allaah Ta`aala will let there be a group of Muslims on the surface of this earth who will be fighting (*yuqaatiloona*) upon the Haqq, and what that means is that first and foremost, they themselves are upon the Haqq. Then, they are fighting for the sake of the Haqq, fighting to defend the Haqq, fighting in the path of the Haqq, fighting to establish the Haqq.

Thereafter: "victorious over those who oppose them". Regardless of the era the world is in, regardless of the situation, the circumstances, the difficulties, regardless of whatever level of military strength the Kuffaar possess, this Taa'ifah (Group) of Muslims will continue to be victorious against them. And, no matter what the Kuffaar try to do, regardless of the number of Crusades they wage against this Ummah, this Taa'ifah will never be wiped out. They will remain right up until the end, to have the opportunity to fight Dajjaal alongside the Mahdi and Nabi `Eesa عليه السلام.

In every era, Allaah Ta`aala will raise such people who will defend the Deen. In every era, Allaah Ta`aala will bring about people who will oppose the Kuffaar and stand victorious over them, their foot on the necks of the Kaafirs.

Each and every time the Kuffaar think that they will now succeed in obliterating Islaam from the face of the earth once and for all, Allaah Ta`aala will bring about such servants of His who will repel them and tramp them down, smashing their plots. This will never cease to be the case.

In this Kitaab we are discussing one such plot, and how Allaah Ta`aala brought about a group of Muslims who crushed it in a way the world would never forget.

- Muhammad Huzayfab ibn Adam Aal-Ebrahim.

12th of Safar, 1440 - 22nd of October, 2018.

The Saljuq Dynasty

In his Kitaab on the history of the Ottoman Empire, entitled "*Taareekh ad-Dawlah al-'Iyah al-'Uthmaaniyyah*" (A History of the Noble 'Uthmaani State), the Turkish historian, Muhammad Fareed Beg (d. 1338 A.H.), son of Ahmad Fareed Pasha, writes:

"The Saljuqs:

In Dhu-l Hijjah of the year 422 A.H., the 'Abbaasid Khaleefah, al-Qaadir Billaah passed away at the age of approximately 87. His Khilaafah had lasted for 41 years. After his demise, people gave the Bay'ah to his son, Abu Ja'far 'Abdullaah, who was given the title of "Al-Qaa'im bi-Amrillaah". It was during the Khilaafah of Abu Ja'far al-Qaa'im that the dynasty of "Aal Saljuq" (The House of Saljuq, later known as the Great Saljuq Empire) began.

This family which at the time was known by the name of "Duqaaq" was from the most noble of the tribes of the Turks, and they were originally from the lands of Kashghar, which lies in the west of the Chinese lands. A child was born to this family by the name of Saljuq.

On account of the nobility of this child, the King of the Turks at the time, whose name was Yabghu, wanted to bring him closer (perhaps intending to hand the throne over to him after his demise); however, Saljuq chose to instead leave and head to the lands of Islaam, whence he accepted Islaam along with all of those who followed him from his tribe.

After accepting Islaam, he formed an army from those men who followed him, and they settled in a place near to Bukhara, and from here they began carrying out raids against the Kuffaar from among the Turks. Their matter became great and well-known, and the army of Saljuq continued to increase.

Saljuq had three sons: Arsalan, Meekaa'eel and Moosaa.

Meekaa'eel was killed in battle, and he in turn left behind three sons: Yabghu, Chaghri Beg and Tughril Beg.

Fights broke out between them and Baghrakhaan, the then King of Turkistan, which led to excessive bloodshed.

When the rule of the Saljuqs continued to grow and become stronger, Mahmood Ghaznawi became worried that they might attack his lands, so he initiated an attack against them in which he successfully managed to break

up their tribes between Khurasan and Isfahan. However, it wasn't long before they regrouped for a second time and this time they attacked him and were victorious over him and his son, Mas'ood. They then gained control over Khurasan.

In the year 432 A.H., Tughril Beg took advantage of the infighting that was going on between Mas'ood Ghaznawi, his brother Muhammad Ghaznawi and his son, Mawdood. Tughril thus took control over Jurjan and Tabaristan as well. In the year 434 A.H., he took control over Khawarizm and the surrounding areas.

Whilst the Saljuqs were gaining more and more territory, there was chaos in Baghdad on account of fighting taking place between Aal Buyeh from ad-Daylam (Shias originally from Iran, known as the Buwaihids, or the Buyid Dynasty) and the Turkish armies, so much so that when Jalaal-ud-Dawlah ibn Buyeh died in Sha'baan of the year 435 A.H., his army was unable to come to an agreement regarding who they would put in charge as the leader after him, and thus they remained without leadership for a period of time, until Abu Kalijar ibn Sulmaan-ud-Dawlah ibn Bahaa-ud-Dawlah took over the leadership of the Buyids.

He entered Baghdad in Safar of the year 436 A.H. His rule was not long-lived, though; he died in the year 440 A.H. in Kirman, and his son took over after him, who was known as "al-Malik ar-Raheem".

It was during the reign of "al-Malik ar-Raheem" that numerous battles took place between Ahlus Sunnah and the Shias in Baghdad, and Ahlus Sunnah burnt the graves of some of the leaders of the Buyids and many of them (Shias of the Buwaihids) were killed.

Whilst this was taking place, the power of Tughril Beg as-Saljuqi was increasing by the day, until he eventually took control of Isfahan in Muharram of the year 443 A.H. He entered Tabrez in the year 446, then headed to Hulwaan and settled there in 447. The leaders of the Turks called him to Baghdad, offering to obey him as the ruler, so he accepted, and the Khaleefah of the time also accepted, and on the 22nd of Ramadhan of this same year (447 A.H.) he wrote to Tughril Beg asking him to come.

Tughril Beg entered Baghdad along with those who had come with him from his army, after having promised the Khaleefah, Al-Qaa'im bi-Amrillaaah that he would respect their rights (i.e. he would continue to accept him as the Khaleefah). No sooner did he arrive but a battle broke out between them and the armies of al-Malik ar-Raheem, the result of which was (this Shia) al-Malik ar-Raheem being taken prisoner and the defeat of his army. With that, the Buyid Dynasty came to an end after having lasted for 113

years, since the time Mu`izz ibn Buyeh entered Baghdad in Jumaada al-Oolaa of the year 334 A.H.

The Saljuq Dynasty was now officially established in Baghdad. In order to establish his foothold even further, Tughril Beg married his niece to the Khaleefah in the year 448 A.H., and he himself married the daughter of the Khaleefah in Sha`baan of the year 454 A.H.

In the year 450, Ibrahim, the uterine brother of Tughril Beg, rebelled against him, so Tughril fought and killed him. At the same time while he was quelling this rebellion, another rebellion started up in Baghdad under the leadership of a man known as al-Basaaseeri. However, Tughril Beg fought al-Basaaseeri and killed him on the 8th of Dhu-l Hijjah, in the year 451.

In Rajab of the same year, Daawud ibn Meekaa'eel, son of Saljuq and brother of Tughril, passed away. He had been in charge of Khurasan. After his demise, his son took over: Alp Arslan.

A few years later, on the night of Jumu`ah, 8th of Ramadhaan in the year 455 A.H., Tughril Beg passed away, and with his passing Alp Arslan became the leader of the Saljuqs, thus taking control over Khurasan, Iraq, Mosul, Isfahan, Tabrez, etc. After becoming the leader, Alp Arslan expanded the Saljuq Dynasty even further, conquering many other lands. The leaders of Jund, Bukhara, Diyaar Bakr, Halab, etc., all submitted to his rule.

Alp Arslan remained ruler of the Saljuqs and all these many lands until he was killed on the 11th of Rabee-ul-`Awwal, in the year 465, after which he was succeeded by his son, Malik Shah." [End quote.]

Malik Shah had two Wazeers: Nizaam-ul-Mulk and Taaj-ul-Mulk, and it was during his reign that the Saljuq Dynasty reached its peak and became known as the "Great Saljuq Empire", and he himself was titled by the Khaleefah: "The Sultaan of the East and the West."

The Great Saljuq Dynasty, like the Ottomans who ruled later on, were firmly on the Hanafi Madh-hab in Fiqh and the Maatureedi Madh-hab in `Aqeedah. Alp Arslan, of course, was a staunch Hanafi, and it is mentioned by the Mu`arrrikheen that he undertook a journey to visit the Qabr of Imaam Abu Haneefah رحمه الله عليه.

Key Figures in the Battle

From the Muslims:

Alp Arsalan:

Abu Shujaa` Muhammad ibn Daawud Chaghri ibn Meekaa'eel ibn Saljuq.

That is the real name of the man who became known as "Alp Arsalan", a name meaning "Brave Lion".

He was born in Khurasan in the year 1026 C.E.

From childhood days he had been trained well in the art of warfare and the skills associated with it, and during the lifetime of his father, Daawud Chaghri, he used to carry out extensive Ghazawaat against the Kuffaar, including the Shia Fatimids, thus aiding in the establishment and spread of the Saljuq Dynasty.

When Tughril Beg died in the year 1063 C.E. (455 A.H.), Alp Arsalan succeeded him as the leader of the Saljuqs. From the very beginning of his reign, he was faced with difficulties: his father's cousin, Kutulmish, rebelled in Khurasan in the year 1064, and his brother rebelled twice, the first time being in 1064 and the second time being in 1067.

Despite having to quell these rebellions, Alp Arsalan at the same time carried out raids against the Kuffaar, the first and most important of these being a Ghazwah against Georgia and Armenia, a battle which resulted in the Georgian king submitting to Alp Arsalan and the rule of the Saljuqs.

The next year, 1065, Alp Arsalan led the Mujaahideen under him into Transoxania.

In the year 1070, he conquered Aleppo during one of his campaigns into Shaam. With this, his rule now extended from Central Asia to the Mediterranean.

Alp Arsalan has been described by historians as being a very pious man, very generous, possessing outstanding bravery, being a great Mujaahid and a wise leader.

During his reign, he was aided in the running of affairs by his Wazeer, Nizaam-ul-Mulk, who later founded an organisation which strengthened the

Saljuq Dynasty during both the reign of Alp as well as that of his son, Malik Shah.

With the intention of conquering Caesarea Mazaka, the capital of Cappadocia, Alp Arsalan assembled a group of Mujaahideen and led them into battle himself, crossing the Euphrates and entering the city. Thereafter, along with Nizaam-ul-Mulk he marched on Armenia and Georgia, both of which he conquered in the year 1064. Ani, the capital of Armenia, was captured after a siege that lasted 25 days.

The grandson of Imaam Abu-l Faraj ibn al-Jawzi, famously known as Sibte ibn al-Jawzi, quotes an eyewitness who gave an account of the conquering of Ani, saying:

"The army entered the city, slaughtered its inhabitants and burnt it to the ground, leaving it in ruins and taking prisoner those who were still alive. The dead bodies were so many that they blocked the streets, and it was not possible to walk anywhere without stepping over them. The number of prisoners was at least 50,000. I decided to enter the city to see the destruction for myself. I tried to find a street wherein I would not have to walk over the dead bodies, but that was impossible."

During the reign of Alp Arsalan, the Saljuqs had been carrying out many attacks against the Byzantines. In a move of retaliation against the Saljuqs, the then Byzantine Emperor, Romanos IV Diogenes led an army of 200,000 soldiers against them in the year 1071. Alp Arsalan and the Mujaahideen with him rode out to confront them, and they clashed at a place known as Manzikert, near to Lake Van. The fight that ensued is the subject of this book, and it is one of the most famous battles in the history of Islaam, and one that crushed the hubris of the Byzantine Empire and eventually put an end to their rule. This battle also led to the conquering of Anatolia by the Saljuqs.

Mu'arrrikheen (historians) like Imaam ibn Katheer and others report that Alp Arsalan was killed by Yusuf al-Khawarizmi, the governor of a fortress the Saljuqs under Alp Arsalan had been sieging for several days. After it was conquered, Yusuf al-Khawarizmi was captured and brought to the Sultaan, Alp Arsalan, who ordered that he be executed. Yusuf al-Khawarizmi drew a dagger he had with him and rushed the Sultan, managing to stab him in the chest. Alp passed away from this wound four days later, after which he was taken to Merv where he was buried next to his father, Daawud Chaghri, and the Saljuqs apprehended and killed Yusuf al-Khawarizmi.

Alp Arsalan passed away on the 11th of Rabee`-ul-Awwal, 465 A.H., corresponding to 1072 C.E.

From the Kuffaar:

Romanos IV Diogenes:

Romanos IV Diogenes, born in 1030 C.E. and died in 1072 C.E. - also known as Romanus IV, he was the son of Constantine Diogenes (d. 1032) and was from the Cappadocian family. His mother was a daughter of Basil Argyros, brother of the emperor Romanos III.

He was a member of the Byzantine military aristocracy who, after marrying the widowed empress Eudokia Makrembolitissa, was crowned Byzantine emperor. His reign lasted from 1068 to 1071.

When Romanos IV Diogenes was made Emperor of Byzantine, the Romans began to hope that he would be the one to finally push back the armies of the Saljuqs who had been laying havoc to the Romans and conquering their lands. The two Roman Emperors, Constantine IX and Constantine X had been wholly unsuccessful in their attempts to repel the Mujaahideen of the Saljuqs from the time of Tughril Beg. The Romans had already lost Northern Syria, East Anatolia and most of Armenia. Day by day they were losing land, their empire crumbling, whereas the Muslims under the leadership of the Saljuqs - now headed by Alp Arslan - were ever growing in strength and establishment in the land.

Romanos IV Diogenes made it his mission in life to try and wipe out the Saljuq Dynasty and take back the lands from the Muslims and return them to the rule of the Cross. It was with this thought in mind that he gathered an army of 200,000 soldiers and marched on the Saljuqs, hoping to catch them by surprise, hoping Alp would be caught unawares, but Alp Arslan was quickly informed of the plot of Romanos and he immediately marched out to meet them with an army of Mujaahideen 20,000 strong, clashing at the Battle of Manzikert.

Allaah Ta`aala granted victory to the Muslims and they crushed the army of Kufr. For the first time in history, a Roman emperor was taken captive, but Alp Arslan decided to set him free after a ransom was paid, and sent him back to his land. It didn't do Romanos any good, however; for, no sooner had he returned home but he was blinded by his own people at the command of John Doukas and exiled to Prote in the Sea of Marmara, to die a slow death.

Battle of Manzikert

The battle of Hanoot, also known as the Battle of Manzikert, and known in Arabic as "Ma`rakat-ul-Mulaadhakard", is counted as being from the greatest battles the Muslims ever fought and which will be remembered till the end of time, such as the battles of Qadisiyyah, Hitteen, `Ayn Jaaloot, etc. - battles that had a lasting impact on the world and its people, battles that made a change in the world.

The victory the Muslims experienced in the Battle of Manzikert was a decisive one in that it absolutely terminated the conquering of lands by the Romans, pushed them out from most of the lands of Asia Minor and crushed the strength of the Byzantine Empire, to such an extent that Byzantine never recovered from it; thus, the Battle of Manzikert was the death blow to the Byzantine Empire, the then so-called "Superpower of the World".

Historians have mentioned that the defeat the Kuffaar suffered in this battle was so complete at the hands of the Muslim that they were thrown into a state of chaos and terror, fearing the destruction of the Cross and the absolute seizure of all lands by the Muslims, for Islaam, to be ruled by the Sharee`ah. Thus, they began plotting a way to change the tide, to turn the tables against the Muslims, and this culminated in the First Crusade which took place in 1095.

Muhammad ibn Daawud Chaghri, famously known as Alp Arslan (meaning, "The Brave Lion"), had become the leader of the Great Saljuq Empire after the death of his uncle, Tughril Beg. There had been some infighting and attempts at rebellions, but these were stamped out by Alp Arslan after which he took control.

Alp Arslan, like his uncle Tughril Beg, was a consummate military leader, a master at warfare, a Mujaahid who loved Jihaad and wished for Shahaadah, and a tactical genius.

After assuming the leadership of the Saljuqs, he adopted a specific political approach in that he first of all consolidated his control and establishment in the lands wherein the Saljuqs were ruling, and thereafter he turned his attention to bringing more and more lands under the rule of Islaam, leading the Mujaahideen into battle and expanding the Saljuq Dynasty.

The conquering of these lands by the Saljuqs opened up the way for Da`wah to be given freely within these lands, and many people began entering the Deen of Islaam. The reason behind this was that the battles fought by Alp

Arsalan and the Mujaahideen under him were antithetical to the battles and wars fought by the Kuffaar "conquerors", in that their fight was undertaken with the intention of worldly motives and gains, whereas Alp Arsalan was not merely conquering lands; he, with the Mujaahideen under him, was leading a Jihaad in order to uproot Kufr and gain *Tamkeen fil-Ardh* (establishment of Islaam in the land), and to bring the lands under the Rule of Allaah Ta'aalaa and to raise high the Raayah (Banner) of Islaam, the Raayah of "*Laa Ilaaha Illallaah, Muhammadur Rasoolullaah* صلى الله عليه وسلم".

Thus, these battles were fuelled by the winds of Islaam and the spirit of Jihaad fee Sabeelillaah, and they were coloured with the colour of the Deen.

Alp Arsalan spent the first seven years after assuming leadership in first and foremost strengthening those lands from the lands of Islaam which were weakening, before undertaking any further expansions. Once he was satisfied that these lands were sufficiently strengthened and established, he now began carrying out his plans to attain his further goals, which was the conquering of the nearby Christian lands as well as the destruction of the Kaaafir Shia Faatimid Dynasty, and uniting the lands of Islaam under the banner of the Abbasid Khilaafah. Thus, he gathered the Mujaahideen and marched on Armenia and Georgia, and Allaah Ta'aalaa granted the Mujaahideen victory over those lands.

Alp Arsalan then led a Ghazwah in northern Shaam against the Murdaasiyyah Dynasty, in Aleppo, founded by Saalih ibn Murdaas in the year 414 A.H. (1023 C.E.). The Murdaasiyyah were Kaaafir Shias, hence Alp routed them and replaced the Faatimid Shia rule with the Abbasid Khilaafah. Thereafter, he organised another Ghazwah in the south of Shaam and conquered Ramla and Baytul Maqdis, snatching it out of the hands of the Faatimids who had been ruling there.

The victories the Saljuqs were having angered the then Byzantine Emperor, Romanos IV Diogenes, so he gathered his armies and led them into a number of battles against the Muslims, the most important of them being the last one, the Battle of Manzikert in the year 463 A.H., corresponding to August, 1070 C.E.

Imaam ibn Katheer describes this battle in al-Bidaayah wan-Nihaayah, mentioning the pomp and show with which Romanos IV Diogenes had gone into battle, with 200,000 horsemen, 35,000 of the Franks, 15,000 from the soldiers who lived in Constantinople, over 1,500 animals carrying weapons, provisions, etc., as well as bringing with trebuchets, all with the intention of wiping out Islaam and the Muslims. He writes:

"Sultaan Alp Arsalan rode out to meet him in an army of approximately 20,000 (Mujaahideen), at a place known as Zahwah, on Wednesday, five days remaining from the month of Dhu-l Qa`dah.

The Sultaan was worried about the large number of the Roman army, so Faqeeh Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn `Abdil Malik al-Bukhaari advised him to commence the battle on Jumu`ah, after Zawaal, for at that time the Khutabaa (those giving Khutbahs) will be making Du`aa for the Mujaahideen.

Thus, when that time arrived, and the two arms faced off against each other, the Sultaan dismounted from his horse and performed Sujood to Allaah Ta`aala, rubbing his face in the sand, making Du`aa unto Allaah and seeking His Help. Thus, Allaah Ta`aala sent down His Victory upon the Muslimeen, and they (the Mujaahideen) killed an excessive amount (from the Kuffaar), and their king, Armanos (Romanos IV) was taken captive.

When he (Romanos) was brought before the king, Alp Arsalan, he (Alp) struck him with his hand three times. When Romanos was laying on the ground, Alp placed his foot on his neck and said to him: "If I had been the prisoner and had been brought before you, what would you have done?" He said: "(I would have done) every despicable thing." Alp asked him: "So what do you think I will do?" He said: "Either you will kill me and display me in your lands, or you will pardon me and accept the ransom, and return me (to my land)." Alp said: "I have not resolved on other than pardoning and accepting the ransom."

Thus, he was ransomed for one and a half million Dinars. Thereafter, (Alp) sent him back to his land with a convoy carrying a flag upon which was written: "*Laa Ilaaha Illallaah Muhammadur Rasoolullaah* صلى الله عليه وسلم".

Imaam ibn al-Atheer رحمه الله and others from the Mu'arrikheen (historians) describe the apex of this battle, saying:

"Alp Arsalan was a pious man who made use of the asbaab (causes) of victory: both the Deeni asbaab and the worldly asbaab. He was close to the `Ulamaa and would take their naseehah, and how great was the naseehah given to him by the `Aalim Rabbaani, Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn `Abdil Malik al-Bukhaari al-Hanafi, in the Battle of Mulaadhakard (Manzikert), when he said to Sultaan Alp Arsalan: 'Indeed, you are fighting for such a Deen which, Allaah Ta`aala Himself has promised to aid it and make it reign supreme over every other Deen, and I hope that Allaah has decreed the victory of this battle in your name. Thus, meet them on the Day of Jumu`ah, on the hour in which the Khutabaa shall be upon the Mimbars, for they shall be making Du`aa for the Mujaahideen.'

Thus, when that hour arrived, Alp Arslan led the Mujaahideen in Salaah, and wept, and the people wept on account of his weeping. He made Du`aa and they said Aameen. He said to him: 'Whosoever wants to leave the battlefield, let him leave, because there is no Sultaan here today who is ordering or prohibiting.' He then threw aside his bow and arrows and took up his sword. He went into his tent, put on a white shroud (kafan) and applied hanoot¹. He then exited the tent and said to the Mujaahideen: "If I am killed today, then this is my kafan." All of the Mujaahideen entered their tents and did the same.

Allaahu Akbar, it is for the likes of this that the Help of Allaah descends."

It was on account of this action of Alp Arslan and the Mujaahideen, of donning their kafans and applying hanoot, marching into battle with the full intention of Shahaadah, that this battle, the Battle of Manzikert, became known as the "Battle of Hanoot".

In this battle, Alp Arslan and the Mujaahideen with him demonstrated the Rooh of Jihaad, for Jihaad is not simply to kill for Allaah - Jihaad is to die for Allaah. A person who is not ready to die for Allaah Ta`aala shall never be able to fight a true Jihaad as described by Allaah Ta`aala in the Qur'aan:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ

{ 'Fight Jihaad in (the Path of) Allaah the way it deserves to be fought...' } [Soorah al-Hajj.]

It is only when the person throws the Dunyaa aside and goes forth with the desire for Shahaadah that he will be able to fight a Jihaad that is "*Haqqa Jihaadib*" (the way it deserves to be fought).

Imaam ibn al-Atheer mentions: "So Allaah Ta`aala sent down His Help upon them and victory; thus, the Romans were defeated and such a large number of them were killed that the land was filled with their corpses, and along with this, their emperor was taken prisoner."

¹ Imaam al-Baaji al-Maaliki explains what hanoot is in *al-Muntaqaa*, saying: "Hanoot is the fragrance that is applied to the body and kafan (shroud) of the mayyit (deceased), (and it is made of) musk, and `ambar (ambergris), and camphor, and every such (perfume) which what is sought from it is its smell and not its colour."

Imaam as-Saawi mentions in his haashiyah of *ash-Sharh as-Sagheer* that hanoot can contain rosewater as well.

Thus, hanoot is primarily camphor, and other things such as rosewater, musk, ambergris, etc. may be added to it, but a person can suffice with just camphor.

The battle had begun with Byzantines placing their spearmen in front, charging with Saljuqs. Alp Arslan employed a tactic he had used in the past: he had the Mujaahideen ride backwards on horseback, firing arrow after arrow at the Kuffaar, keeping just out of reach of the spears, forcing the Byzantine foot-soldiers to pursue them across the field.

The Saljuqs were masters of archery, and they would begin training in archery from the age of four. They were renowned for their skills at horse-riding, warfare and archery, using the bow as their weapon of choice, which in their case was the recurve, reflex composite bow, arrows fired by the thumb-release method used by the Turks throughout their history.

Their tactic of firing arrows at the enemy whilst seated backwards on horseback is a technique which was known as the "Parthian Shot".

For eight hours this continued, until the sun began setting and their soldiers were worn out, at which point Alp gave the order for the Mujaahideen to go forward and start cutting them down. The Mujaahideen were deployed in the formation of a crescent, and Romanos watched as more and more of his soldiers were dropping like flies and the semi-circle was closing in around him. The commanders under him were overtaken by the fear of death and began to retreat, resulting in chaos in the Byzantine army and making it even easier for the Muslims to pursue and slaughter them.

As night fell, the corpses of the Byzantine soldiers lay scattered on the battlefield. At last, even the Varangian guard, the last of the Byzantine soldiers whose duty it was to remain at the side of the Emperor and protect him, were slaughtered as well, and finally Romanos IV Diogenes, Emperor of the Byzantine Empire, was taken prisoner. The Muslims had won and the Kuffaar had suffered such a thorough defeat which they would never get over.

Till today, the Battle of Manzikert is celebrated by the Turks, 947 years later, and they remember the Mujaahid leader, Alp Arslan, who stood in front of his army on the battlefield facing the Kuffaar, he and all of the Mujaahideen with him dressed in kafans and perfumed with hanoot, to not only fight fee Sabeelillaah but to die fee Sabeelillaah.

Epilogue

The victory of the Muslims at this battle threw open the gates for them to march onto Byzantine and Anatolia and bring them under the rule of Islaam.

The Kuffaar themselves have admitted to their miserable defeat in this battle, with John Julius Norwich describing the Battle of Manzikert as "*the greatest disaster suffered by the Empire in its seven and a half centuries of existence.*"

Steven Runciman in his "History of the Crusades" noted the same: "*The Battle of Manzikert was the most decisive disaster in Byzantine history. The Byzantines themselves had no illusions about it. Again and again their historians refer to that dreadful day.*"

As Allaah Ta`aala says in the Qur'aan Kareem:

قَاتِلُوهُمْ يُعَذِّبُهُمُ اللَّهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَيُخْزِهِمْ وَيَنْصُرْكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَيَشْفِ صُدُورَ
قَوْمٍ مُّؤْمِنِينَ

{ 'Fight them! Allaah will punish them at your hands, and disgrace them, and grant you victory over them, and heal the hearts of a people who are Mu'mineen.' } [Soorah at-Tawbah, 9:14]

The Battle of Hanoot shattered the illusion of the Byzantine Empire as being "unconquerable" even in the eyes of the West, and it was their fear and realisation that Byzantine would not be able to protect Christianity - along with their hatred for everything connected to Islaam and the Muslims - that spurred them on to initiating the Crusades.

The Kuffaar have never been - and will never be - a "Superpower". The only "Superpower" is Allaah Ta`aala. If the Muslims have the Nusrat of Allaah Ta`aala on their side, then even a small band of Mujaahideen could wipe out all of the armies of the Kuffaar, the first of them and the last of them.

A "vanguard" of Muslims who emulate - in every facet of their lives, even in the smallest of matters - the Sunnah of Rasoolullaah صلى الله عليه وسلم, the Khulafaa-e-Raashideen and Sahaabah-e-Kiraam, will always be victorious over the Kuffaar.

إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرُكُمْ مِنْ
بَعْدِهِ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

{ ‘If Allaah helps you, no one can overpower you, but if He leaves you without assistance, who is there that can help you after Him? Only in Allaah should the Mu’mineen place their Tawakkul.’ } [Soorah Aal-e-`Imraan, 3:160]

It is a fallacy to believe that the Muslims will fail to defeat the Kuffaar on account of the Kuffaar exceeding them in technology, weaponry, provisions, training, or any other Dunyawī sabab (cause).

Muslims can only fail to defeat the Kuffaar if there is a weakness in their Imaan, a weakness in their Tawakkul on Allaah Ta`aala, a weakness in their carrying out the Commandments of Allaah Ta`aala and abstaining from His Prohibitions, a weakness in following the Sunnah of Rasoolullaah صلى الله عليه وسلم. There is no reason for a Muslim to ever be in awe of the Kuffaar. It is the worst of jahaalat for a professed Muslim to desire to emulate the Kuffaar in any matter.

In this Battle of Hanoot, an army of 20,000 Mujaahideen - and some historians even say it was as little as 15,000 Mujaahideen - went up against an army of over 200,000 Byzantine soldiers and decimated them in a battle that the world continues to remember almost a thousand years later.

These people were not Sahaabah-e-Kiraam; they were regular Muslims, yet Allaah Ta`aala honoured them with such a resounding victory over the forces of Kufr. Thus, Muslims should not ignorantly assume that in any era, it is not possible to defeat the Kuffaar, that the Kuffaar are too technologically advanced, too wealthy, too powerful to be defeated. It is only cowardice, a weakness of Imaan and an ignorance of Islaam that prompts such notions. The reality is that any time in the history of this Ummah, if the Muslims turn to Allaah Ta`aala and do as He has commanded them to do, and follow this Qur’aan He has given them and the Sunnah displayed to us by Rasoolullaah صلى الله عليه وسلم, they will always be victorious, because this Noor of Allaah Ta`aala will never be extinguished.

تَمَّتْ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

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